

Will the broadcast flag interfere with consumers ability to make copies of DTV content for their personal use, either on personal video recorders or removable media?

The clear intent of this facility (and its likely use) will be to prevent any and all copies, regardless of whether they are currently permissible under copyright law (as upheld by the Supreme Court in the Sony case). The proponents are attempting to get rights through technical means that they currently do NOT have. In other words, this is a profoundly anti-democratic devices, which is being used as an end run around the Congress and court system. The FCC should not be a party to this action, and should represent the rights of the vast majority of Americans who have demonstrated over and over again that they want the right to record the show that they watch (and pay for!) and the right to view these personal copies on the machines of their choice at the time of their choice, as many times as they choose. If the content providers want to protect their copyright, let them come up with a technical means that does not infringe on the public's current right. Until then, the power of governmental regulations should not be used to further the interests of a tiny number of wealth and politically connected people.

Would the digital flag interfere with consumers ability to send DTV content across networks, such as home digital networks connecting digital set top boxes, digital recorders, digital servers and digital display devices?

The answer to this question is obviously yes. The proponents scheme makes no distinction between my viewing a show that I recorded on one of my several devices and my sharing this show with the World Wide Web. Unless this distinction is clearly articulated and protected by a copy protection scheme, such a scheme deserves no blessing and protection from the federal government.

Would the broadcast flag requirement limit consumers ability to use their existing electronic equipment (equipment not built to look for the flag) or make it difficult to use older components with new equipment that is compliant with the broadcast flag standard?

Probably less so, since older equipment tends to be analog. On the other hand, it is easy to see content providers putting pressure on manufactures to not provide analog outputs, thereby obsoleting a vast amount of consumer equipment.

Would a broadcast flag requirement limit the development of future equipment providing consumers with new options?

Again, the answer to this question is obviously yes. The scheme is a simple-minded, brute force attempt to prevent consumers from fairly using the material that they paid for. The obvious consequences are to prevent further innovations, such as mechanisms for purchasing rights to share and redistributed content, and more sophisticated schemes. Furthermore, a forcible conclusion is that this equipment will likely be unpopular and will not lead to the enhanced experiences that should be possible with digital technology. It is amazing to me that the industry seems unable to recognize that consumers are smart enough not to purchase crippled technology, such as DAT, DVIX, etc.

What will be the cost impact, if any, that a broadcast flag requirement would have on consumer electronics equipment?

Probably minimal in an absolute sense of increasing the circuit complexity. Certainly very large in terms of making new technology less attractive and

appealing, thereby delaying or preventing its widespread adoption.